

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A program recording system, comprising:

a confirmation request receiving unit which receives a request for confirmation of contents of a program that is being broadcast, from a remote user;

a capturing unit which captures at least one scene of the program according to the confirmation request;

an image transmission processor which transmits a thus captured image to a terminal of the user;

a recording request receiving unit which receives a request for recording the program from the user; and

a recording instructing unit which instructs a recording of the program recording according to the recording request.

2. A program recording system, comprising:

an electronic program guide (EPG) storage which stores an extended EPG formed by adding to an EPG a guide image indicating contents of a program;

a confirmation request receiving unit which receives a request for confirmation of the contents of the program, from a remote user;

an image acquiring unit which acquires the guide image corresponding to the program for which the confirmation request was made, from the extended EPG;

an image transmission processor which transmits the acquired guide image to a terminal of the user;

a recording request receiving unit which receives a request for recording the program from the user; and

a recording instructing unit which instructs a recording of the program according to the recording request.

3. A program recording system according to Claim 2, wherein said image acquiring unit 40 acquires an image capturing at least one scene of the program, as a substituted guide image, when the confirmation request is made for the program which is currently being broadcast.

4. A program recording system according to Claim 3, wherein the guide image is acquired from said EPG storage so as to be transmitted to the terminal of the user in the event that the program is in the midst of a commercial message.

5. A program recording system according to Claim 2, wherein said confirmation request receiving unit, image acquiring unit and image transmission processor are organized by a common gateway interface (CGI), whereby the CGI receives the confirmation request from the terminal of the remote user and sends back a response thereto in HTML format.

6. A program recording system according to Claim 2, wherein

said recording request receiving unit and said recording instructing unit are organized by a common gateway interface (CGI), whereby a recording request button on display of the terminal of the remote user has a function for transmitting information necessary for the recording request as an argument, so that according to the argument the CGI acquires program information from the EPG storage.

7. A program recording system according to Claim 1, further comprising a recording unit which records on a recording medium the program whose recording has been requested, according to the recording instruction,

wherein said recording unit includes a free-run recording unit which records a program being broadcast continuously in an endless manner; and a program storage which stores a program, from a start point of the program retroactively, whose recording has been instructed.

8. A program recording system according to Claim 2, further comprising a recording unit which records on a recording medium the program whose recording has been requested, according to the recording instruction,

wherein said recording unit includes a free-run recording unit which records a program being broadcast continuously in an endless manner; and a program storage which stores a program, from a start point of the program

retroactively, whose recording has been instructed.

9. A program recording system according to Claim 3, further comprising a recording unit which records on a recording medium the program whose recording has been requested, according to the recording instruction,

wherein said recording unit includes a free-run recording unit which records a program being broadcast continuously in an endless manner; and a program storage which stores a program, from a start point of the program retroactively, whose recording has been instructed.

10. A program recording method, comprising:

receiving a request for confirmation of contents of a program that is being broadcast, from a remote user;

acquiring an image which indicates the contents of the program according to the confirmation request;

transmitting the program-indicating image to a terminal of the user;

receiving a request for recording the program from the user; and

recording the program according to the recording request.

11. A method according to Claim 10, wherein an image capturing at least one scene of the program is acquired as a

FOOTER FOOT

substituted program-indicating image in said acquiring, when the confirmation request is made for the program which is currently being broadcast or the program-indicating image is not available.

12. A method according to Claim 11, wherein the program-indicating image is acquired from an electronic program guide (EPG) so as to be transmitted to the terminal of the user in the event that the program is in the midst of a commercial message.

13. A program recording system comprising a main controller and a recording apparatus both of which are connected to each other via a local area network,

said main controller comprising:

a confirmation request receiving unit which receives a request for confirmation of contents of a program being broadcast, from a remote user;

an image acquiring unit which instructs said recording apparatus, according to the confirmation request, to capture at least one scene of the program and acquires a thus captured image;

an image transmission processor which transmits the captured image to a terminal of the user;

a recording request receiving unit which receives a request for recording the program from the user; and

a recording instructing unit which instructs said recording apparatus to record the program according to the recording request, and

said recording apparatus comprising:

a capturing unit which captures the at least one scene of the program according to a capturing instruction and sends a thus captured image to said image acquiring unit; and

a recording unit which records the program on a recording medium according to the recording instruction.

14. A program recording system according to Claim 13, wherein said main controller and said recording system are integrated into a single system.

15. A program recording system comprising a main controller and a recording apparatus both of which are connected to each other via a local area network,

said main controller comprising:

an electronic program guide (EPG) storage which stores an extended EPG formed by adding to an EPG a guide image implying contents of a program;

a confirmation request receiving unit which receives a request for confirmation of the contents of the program, from a remote user;

an image acquiring unit which acquires the guide image corresponding to the program for which the confirmation

FOIA b 7 - EXEMPT

request was made, from the extended EPG;

an image transmission processor which transmits the acquired guide image to a terminal of the user;

a recording request receiving unit which receives a request for recording the program from the user; and

a recording instructing unit which instructs a recording of the program recording according to the recording request, and

said recording apparatus including:

a recording unit which records the program on a recording medium according to the recording instruction.

16. A program recording system according to Claim 15, wherein said main controller and said recording system are integrated into a single system.

4004647 1004647